

# the Gateway

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Photo by Airman 1st Class Clinton Jones

## ***Tooting his horn***

*1st Lt. Eric Cameron puts his back into it while hitting a note during the Tops in Blue performance Sept. 18 at Rhein-Main. The theme for this year's show is "If You Believe." The Tops in Blue schedule includes 132 performances in 20 countries around the world.*

## **Base honors heritage month**

**Story by Airman 1st Class Clinton Jones**  
Public affairs

The base Hispanic Heritage Committee holds a number of events in celebration of National Hispanic Heritage Month from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15.

The highlight of the events will be a breakfast held at the Zeppelinhaus Club Oct. 11 with guest speaker Chaplain (Col.) Emilio Chaviano, from Miami, Fla.

"Originally, there wasn't going to be anything going on at the base in recognition of the month," said Capt. Richard Valdez, chairman of the Hispanic Heritage Committee. "So when we got things organized, we got Chaplain Chaviano to speak at the breakfast."

National Hispanic Heritage Month actually got its start as a week in 1968.

A public law was passed on Sept. 17, 1968, authorizing the President of the United States to annually establish a Hispanic Heritage Week. On Aug. 18, 1988, the law was improved by changing National

Hispanic Heritage Week to National Hispanic Heritage Month.

This year's theme for the month is "Children ... Our Future."

"I think this is a great theme and it fits everyone," said Petty Officer 1st class Victor Gonzales, a member of the committee. "The theme doesn't only apply to Hispanic children, it applies to children of all races."

The committee started its celebration with a breakfast burrito sale Sept. 19. The next event they'll hold will be a bowling tournament Sept. 30.

The committees' key event will be a breakfast at the Zeppelinhaus Oct. 11, which includes a guest speaker.

In all, National Hispanic Heritage Month is set up to share the Hispanic culture with everyone, Gonzales said.

"We'd like people to find out there's diversity among Hispanic people just as much as there is among Americans," Gonzales said. "And to recognize the contributions Hispanics have made to the country."

## Air Force celebrates 53rd birthday

By Gen. Gregory S. Martin

Commander, U.S. Air Forces in Europe

**RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany (USAFENS)** — We are celebrating our 53rd anniversary as a separate service, and in that period of time, Air Force members have made many contributions and sacrifices to ensure our nation's freedom and preserve peace around the globe. I want to thank each and every one of you for your dedicated service to our country.

Our service was born through the efforts of a unique collection of people who shared a vision of what airpower could contribute to America and drove to make that vision reality — an independent Air Force. The National Security Act of 1947 created a separate United States Air Force and was signed into law by President Harry Truman on July 26 of that year. The swearing in of the first Secretary of the Air Force, W. Stuart Symington, on Sept. 18, 1947, marks the official birthday of the Air Force.

Like those dedicated professionals who came before, you have made our Air Force the most respected air and space force in the world. Thanks for all you do.

## Big guys, little folks, bunnies & blessings

By Father (Capt.) Kerry Abbott  
Base chapel

If you notice increased activity at the chapel this month, don't worry — no one moved Christmas up three months without telling you. But between celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our chapel and the 774<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St. Francis, it is a very special time here.

If you've ever seen me around, you might have said, "who's the monk?" or, "he looks like the statue of that saint in my mom's back yard."

Well, I'm not a monk, nor a statue (though I did have a bird leave a white deposit on my shoulder once in Paris), and I fear to say that I am not a saint either ... strictly speaking.

No, I'm a Franciscan priest and one of your chaplains carrying on a legacy of blessing, prayer and hope here at Rhein-Main spanning some 50 years.

When I was deployed to Operation Deny Flight some of the Marine pilots I was stationed with came in to the chapel tent while I was straightening up one evening after Mass. They were to fly as part of NATO's first combat mission the next morning. They asked me for a blessing.

At first, I was taken aback by all these "tough" guys kneeling down, seeking prayer and understanding.

After all, I had seen them in action downtown Friday night.

At the end of Mass, Sept. 24, I will invite all the children present to line up and receive a special blessing.

The wonder and love in their eyes consistently amazes me as I speak words of prayer and hope over them.

On Oct. 1, 4 p.m., in keeping with a long Franciscan tradition, all of you are invited to bring your bunnies, puppies, cats, stuffed animals, snakes (in cages, please!) to the chapel lawn for these same words of prayer, understanding, hope and love.

But why?

Almost eight centuries ago St. Francis expanded the tradition of asking God's blessing upon ourselves to include all of creation. From the Hebrew tradition of *beraka* (reconciliation), and Greek of *eu-logia*, and Latin of *benedictio* (speech of goodness), we have the modern English word of blessing, praises and hope.

I invite you to join with us, to celebrate ... whether it be the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the chapel, 6:30 p.m., Sept. 24, or by bringing your pets (themselves God's gifts of life and love) to be blessed during the anniversary of St. Francis, 4 p.m., Oct. 1.

Big guys, little folks, stuffed bunnies and kitties — they're all welcome!

**Main Line 330-7777**  
**hotline@rheinmain.af.mil**

*The Main line is your direct link to me about life on Rhein-Main. It's your opportunity to recognize outstanding performers, ask questions, make comments or voice complaints. You can also use the program to report incidents of fraud, waste or abuse.*

*I want to emphasize that the Main Line is not intended to replace your chain of command. In almost every case, your chain of command is the best solution. I strongly encourage everyone to use that route first. Please leave your name, duty section and telephone number when you call so you can be contacted with the appropriate response. Issues of concern to the Rhein-Main community will be printed in the Gateway.*

*The Main Line can be an excellent tool to improve the way we live and work at Rhein-Main. I welcome your inputs.*

Col. Stephen P. Nelson,  
Commander

## the Gateway

### Editorial Staff

Col. Stephen P. Nelson.....Commander  
Tech. Sgt. Stefan Alford.....Chief, public affairs  
Senior Airman Dan Bernath.....Chief, internal  
Airman 1st Class Clinton Jones.....Editor

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*The deadline for the Oct. 6 edition of the Gateway is noon, Sept. 29.*



Photo by Senior Airman Lee Rogers

## Just Chatting

*Tech. Sgt. Stefan Alford of the 469th Air Base Group public affairs office, interviews Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Michael Ryan during Joint Expeditionary Force Experiment 2000.*

# AOC declared official weapons system

By Tech. Sgt. Stefan Alford  
JEFX Public Affairs

**HURLBURT FIELD, Fla.** — The Air Force officially has a new weapons system.

After three years of experimentation, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Michael Ryan announced that the aerospace operations center is now an integral part of how the service will prepare for and conduct future expeditionary operations.

"I declare the AOC as an official weapons system today," Ryan said after a visit here Sept. 8 to view the air operations center during Joint Expeditionary Force Experiment 2000.

JEFX, a two-week event that ended Sept. 15, assessed Air Force expeditionary operations through the use of new technology and capabilities in a simulated warfighting environment that combines live-fly forces, models, simulations and technology insertion at 11 sites across the United States to explore and evaluate new processes.

The aerospace operations center at Hurlburt was the hub for all of the information flow involved in the experiment.

It simulated a forward command and control structure that plans and directs the air campaign using intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, and initiatives

such as agile combat support and time-critical targeting. In essence, it is a forward-deployed war room — light, lean and lethal.

During a real-world operation, the AOC will be the "eyes, ears, hands and legs of the commander," said Ryan.

"In each of our theaters, the ability of the air commander to execute the missions he has depends on the capability to have an aerospace operations center that (can be tailored) ... for the mission he needs to do," the chief of staff explained.

As an integral component of the aerospace power equation, Ryan said the next step in the process is to identify the specialty codes, training pipeline, career path and currency requirements associated with the AOC as a weapons system.

"We need a baselining of the capabilities in that weapons system, just as we do in our capabilities in something like an F-16," said the Air Force's senior leader. "(In the F-16) we have a crew chief that knows how to maintain it and we have pilots that know how to fly it. We have to have the same concept for our aerospace operations centers.

"We have to have those who know how to rapidly set it up and we must have operators who are very familiar with it," Ryan said.

That's where experimentation such as

JEFX comes in.

This year's experiment is the third in a series since 1998 designed to meet the evolving needs of the Expeditionary Aerospace Force of the 21st century and to implement Joint Vision 2020.

"Air Force experimentation provides both near and long-term benefits for our warfighters," said Col. Kevin Dunleavy, the director of JEFX 2000. "It provides a means to assess new technologies and operational concepts, allows warfighter involvement early in the acquisition process and produces better informed investment decisions."

Air Force planners here view experimentation as a discovery process. They are quick to differentiate it from the traditional military exercise, saying the service experiments to learn and exercises to train.

In other words, military exercises hone established procedures to do them more efficiently, while experiments assess those procedures and new ideas that may become procedures.

Experimentation for the Air Force has always been important, said Ryan.

"We always have to be on the cutting edge because it's the leading technology that we leverage for our aerospace capabilities," said the chief of staff. "In this case (with the AOC), what we're looking at is the command and control area to make sure that we can move information around and do it in an efficient and effective way.

"Inviting commercial people to come in (at JEFX) and show us what they have, allows us to interface with them and tell them what we need.

"It allows our bright, young people to be able to do some real creative things," he added, "so it's important to us. It's about our future."

That future involves an Air Force that will continually reshape itself to deploy forward with the smallest footprint in terms of equipment and personnel.

"We're an expeditionary force," said Ryan. "We'll be expected to be expeditionary as far as I can see in the future.

"As far as our vision takes us to 2020, I see no lessening on the demand for us to move forward rapidly and to be able to execute very quickly.

"To do that, we need to get light and lean ... this is critical to the very nature of the business we do."

## *Senior airmen receive lessons on life as NCOs*

**By Senior Airman Dan Bernath**  
Public affairs

If experience is the best teacher, Rhein-Main's future enlisted leaders got more than 200 years of it at a noncommissioned officer mentorship seminar, Sept. 7.

Nine staff sergeant-selects received an introduction to their new supervisory roles from the base's senior enlisted and officer members in an all-day session.

The workshop, sponsored by the Rhein-Main Top IV, represents an effort by senior NCOs to mentor young NCOs and to share some of their hard-earned experience, said Master Sgt. Robert Carr, seminar coordinator.

"As folks make the transition from airman to NCO, a lot of things change," he said. "There are a lot of things they need to know, but they don't necessarily have to learn everything by trial and error."

Seminar presenters covered general sub-

jects like the role of the supervisor and career development as well as more focused topics dealing with the Air Force's substance abuse program and supervisors' legal responsibilities.

For the young future NCOs, the hottest topic concerned coaching the next generation of airmen.

As recent airman subordinates, the attendees seemed acutely aware of the prominent role midlevel supervisors have on their troops — both good and bad.

"I've had some bad supervisors," said Senior Airman Darnell Benson, a supply specialist with the 626<sup>th</sup> Air Mobility Support Squadron and future NCO. "You know, guys who seem more interested in their own career than their troops'. That's not how I want to be."

That's exactly what the seminar is for, Carr said. The key, he said, is learning from those negative experiences as well as the positive ones.

"The most important thing is taking care of your people," Carr said. "In a way, these guys have a real advantage because they know what it's like to be young airmen — it's still fresh for them."

The Top IV began offering the mentorship seminar two years ago as a way for senior NCOs to help smooth the transition for airmen assuming their first supervisory roles, said one seminar presenter.

By the end of the day, most attendees said they felt encouraged by the seminar and were more excited about their new responsibilities.

While the workshop usually draws around 30 staff sergeant-selects, this year's smaller group reflected an Air Force-wide trend.

"We have higher rates of promotion throughout the Air Force, but fewer people getting promoted," said Carr. "The folks here today have a lot to be proud of."



## USAFE boss announces family days for fiscal year 2001

**RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany (USAFENS)** — U.S. Air Forces in Europe officials have scheduled 11 additional family days — three more than last year — in conjunction with major holidays and school spring break during fiscal 2001.

In continuing the command tradition of authorizing family days in conjunction with some U.S. federal holidays, USAFE Commander Gen. Gregory Martin noted in a message to commanders that this practice recognizes “the sacrifices and contributions our members and their families make in support of the USAFE mission.”

He also stated that family days provide commanders a valuable opportunity to focus attention on the positive impact families have on readiness and retention throughout USAFE.

Martin approved the following family days for fiscal 2001:

- Oct. 6 (in conjunction with Columbus Day, Oct. 9)
- Nov. 24 (in conjunction with Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 23)
- Dec. 22 (in conjunction with Christmas Day)
- Jan. 2 (in conjunction with New Year’s Day)
- Jan. 12 (in conjunction with Martin Luther King Jr. birthday, Jan. 15)
- Feb. 16 (in conjunction with President’s Day, Feb. 19)
- Apr. 13 (in conjunction with DODDS Spring Break, April 9-13)
- May 25 (in conjunction with Memorial Day, May 28)
- June 15 (provide three-day weekend in conjunction with end-of-school down day)
- July 5 (in conjunction with Independence Day)
- Aug. 31 (in conjunction with Labor Day, Sept. 3)

## Mission Spotlight



Photo by Airman 1st Class Clinton Jones

*Tech. Sgt. Matthew Shreve, chief of safety, examines an extendable conveyor belt used for postal service. Shreve is responsible for management of the safety program for the 469th Air Base Group and the entire installation.*

## Air Force continues HYT waivers

**WASHINGTON (AFPN)** — The Air Force is continuing its high-year-of-tenure extension policy through fiscal 2001 for those scheduled to reach HYT in fiscal 2001 and 2002.

The service liberalized the HYT extension policy in March 1999 for senior airmen through senior master sergeants and has so far been successful in extending the service of over 2,500 airmen.

The program offers eligible senior airmen through senior master sergeants in most Air Force specialties the opportunity to request a two-year extension if their current HYT occurs between now and the end of fiscal 2002. For instance, qualified individuals with a Sept. 1, 2002, HYT can now request to extend their retirement date to Sept. 1, 2004.

Applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis, with approval

based on individual contributions to mission requirements and ability to meet quality standards.

Wing commanders (or equivalent) are approval/disapproval authority for this program.

The high-year-of-tenure extension policy continues to help bridge the gap between today’s manning and the results of long-term programs designed to improve retention, according to Air Force officials. Commanders are encouraged to support HYT extensions of all qualified applicants.

Some of the continued benefits of the program are:

- Retention of experienced senior airmen and noncommissioned officers;
- Assistance to commanders in meeting operational missions;

For more information, people may contact their orderly rooms.

# Base remembers POW/MIA with events

Story and photos by Airman 1st Class Clinton Jones  
Public affairs

Rhein-Main Air Base held a week of events from Sept. 9 to Sept. 15 to promote public awareness of American prisoners of war and those missing in action.

The week of events was highlighted by Colleen Shine-Lupke, who spoke at the POW/MIA luncheon.

"I'm very honored to be able to share my experiences with Rhein-Main," Shine-Lupke said. "I'll never forget this place."

Now a marketing consultant living in Munich, Germany, Shine-Lupke shared the story of her 25-year search for the remains of her father, Lt. Col. Anthony C. Shine, an Air Force pilot shot down Dec. 2, 1972 over Vietnam. Her father's remains were reinterred at Arlington National Cemetery in October, 1996.

"I think the entire week went extremely well," said 1st Lt. Andrea Legg, event organizer. "I think everyone enjoyed the speaker and I even saw tears come to some people eyes. It was an extremely touching moment"

Other events that were held during the week included a 5K run/walk, a vigil, selling of POW/MIA memorabilia, a memorial golf tournament and a formal retreat ceremony.



*A firing squad salutes the flag.*

*Petty Officer 1st class Victor Gonzales, a navy recruiter, prepares to lay a wreath down as part of the retreat ceremony. A representative from each service laid a wreath out.*



*Senior Airman Yakir Fernandez, Marine Sgt. Mark Streiff and Pfc. Narada Stephens, flag detail, walk to present the flag to the flight commander.*



*Streiff, Sephens and Fernandez fold the flag during retreat.*





Photo by Airman 1st Class Clinton Jones

*Darrell Jackson of AFN tries to get away from the 64th's Axel Fontnot.*

## AFN win means bad news for 64th

By Airman 1st Class Clinton Jones  
Public affairs

The 64th Replacement Company was never able to get anything started as the Armed Forces Network shut them out 20-0 in an intramural football game Sept. 19.

AFN put the game away for good when quarterback Darrell Jackson connected with Stephen Heichelbech on a 40-yard touchdown pass in the second half.

"We played pretty good, but we still need to get more participation from our team," said Jeremy Simpson, player-coach for AFN. "We've played in the championship the last two years and I think this will be our year to win it."

The 64th started the game with the ball first, but was unable to do anything with it as they turned the ball over on downs.

AFN took over and started to make their way towards the end zone.

Jackson started the drive with two quick passes to Douglas Massengale for a first down. With first and goal, Jackson ran an option play to the left and pitched the ball to Simpson for a touchdown. Jackson then completed the extra point to Heichelbech

to give AFN a 7-0 lead over the 64th.

The 64th took over the ball and Mark Clark started the 64th's drive by completing a pass to Chris Chrisman for a short gain. The 64th was stopped when Heichelbech knocked down the pass, giving AFN the ball again.

With their backs against the wall and AFN threatening to score again, the 64th's Clark intercepted the ball in the end zone and ran it back for 20 yards.

The first half ended with AFN leading 7-0.

AFN received the ball first in the second half and wasted no time scoring.

Jackson spotted Heichelbech running down the sideline and hit him for a touchdown. AFN failed to convert the extra point, leaving them with a 13-0 lead.

AFN went on to score one more touchdown, raising their lead to 20-0, and winning the game.

"It was a hard-fought game, and we made a couple of mistakes that got our team into some trouble," said Narada Stephens, player-coach for the 64th. "AFN played good today and we played poorly. Thus, we lost the ball game."